

Georgia's Pre-K Class Reduction: Policies and Processes

Bobby D. Cagle, MSW
Commissioner

Susan Adams
Acting Assistant Commissioner for Pre-K

Monica Warren
Pre-K Director

Bentley Ponder, Ph.D.
Director of Research and Evaluation

Objectives

- Describe the context leading to class closures.
- Describe the process used to determine which classes will be closed.
- Answer any questions about the process.

FY 2012 Pre-K Budget

Governor Deal's Proposal (March 7, 2011)

Georgia's Pre-K will remain a 6.5 hour instructional day with 1.5 hours teacher planning.

Reductions

- 22 students per classroom (increase of 2)
- Nine-month program (160 instructional days)
- Operating reduction (only 6.8%)
- Training & Experience compensation reduced
- Transition Coaches eliminated
- Governor's book not funded
- Maintain nine credentialed rates

Total Program Funding Recommended by Governor Deal

- 86,000 slots
- \$300,632,586 Total Lottery Funding (Final)
- (\$54,384,070) in savings (Final)

Funding Challenges for 2011-2012

- 86,000 slots divided by 22 children per classroom = 3,909 Pre-K classrooms for next school year.
- Currently there are 4,215 Pre-K classrooms.
- Therefore, Georgia's Pre-K will face a reduction of 306 classrooms across the state.
- This is a classroom reduction, not a program reduction.

DECAL's Commitment for Pre-K Class Closure Process

- Transparent
- Equitable
 - Statewide (regionally representative)
 - Preserves Parent Choice (representative of varied program types)
- Child Centered and Family Focused
- Receptive to Stakeholder Feedback

Key Dates

- March 18th Pre-K Funding Focus Group
- March 25th Voluntary Closure Email Sent
- April 1st Voluntary Closure Email Due
- April 14th Process Webinars Begin
- April 19th Governor's Office Notified of Closings at the County Level; Conference Call with Associations and Advocates
- April 20th Programs with Class Reductions Notified; Legislature Notified of Closings at the County Level

General Process

- Tier One: Site Level

- DECAL will use various site level data to determine possible class closures.
- Data points supported by March 18th Funding Focus Groups

- Tier Two: County Level

- DECAL will use various county level data to determine where possible class closures could occur.
- Data points supported and suggested by March 18th Funding Focus Group

Tier One: Site Level Data

Any of the following data points could make a program eligible to lose a class:

- Voluntary Class Closures
- Probation Status
- Low Rosters
- Grant Agreement Compliance Issues

Tier Two : County Level Data

- County level reductions based on the increase to 22 children per classroom
 - **Compute** Capacity (current number of Pre-K classes multiplied by 22 children per class)
 - **Subtract** Current Enrollment and Current Wait List
 - **Equals** Number of “Extra” Classes
- County level saturation rates
- County level waiting list (numbers and percentage)

Tier Two : County Level Data

- 3rd Grade CRCT Scores
- Free/Reduced Lunch
- County Level Unemployment Rate
- Percentages of Each:
 - Enrollment Based Data (51.6%)
 - Income Based Data (27.6 %)
 - CRCT Data (20.6%)

Tier Two : County Level Data

Each county was given an index score. The score was used to determine whether the county should lose an estimated % of its classes.

- Index Score: 0-4 = 10%
- Index Score: 5-9 = 8%
- Index Score: 10-14 = 6%
- Index Score: 15-22 = 4%

Tier Two:

Data Used to Determine Specific Programs to Close

- Child Care Services Compliance (Health/Safety)
- Probation
- Late Rosters
- Lowest Rosters in County (over 6 cycles)
- Equitable Pledge: Preserve Parent Choice
- To reach the number of needed classes, hard decisions sometimes had to be made.

Projected Waiting List

- Despite the current Pre-K class reduction, we project the 2012 year-end waiting list to be reduced by approximately 25%.

Summary

- Process was systematic, objective, and data driven.
- Process met DECAL commitments.
- Process was done to give providers as much notice as possible.

Next Steps

- Further analysis to determine impact
- Providers will be notified on April 20th in three ways:
 - Phone call
 - Email
 - Certified Letter
- Ongoing communication

Question and Answer

Contact Information

General Questions:
PreK@dec.al.ga.gov

Commissioner Bobby Cagle, MSW
Bobby.Cagle@dec.al.ga.gov

Susan Adams, Acting Assistant Commissioner for Pre-K
Susan.Adams@dec.al.ga.gov